

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 3215
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Business & Commerce
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

H.B. 3215 allows a separate performance-based avenue to achieve energy efficiency in homes, which allows homeowners and builders to choose the features best for them based on cost and/or feature preferences, will allow home builders to build more energy-efficient homes at more cost-effective prices, encourage innovation in energy efficiency, and help provide more competitively priced products to the market.

An intelligent and rational energy code policy that results in significantly better compliance rates and allows for more cost-effective implementation of the state energy code should be the goal. Without a reasonable performance path, housing affordability and code compliance will suffer as future energy codes are updated with ever-increasing inflexibility and extraordinarily high stringency levels. H.B. 3215 will reduce the negative impact of future energy code mandates, while strengthening the energy efficiency of current requirements.

H.B. 3215 amends current law relating to energy efficiency building standards.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 388.003(i), (j), and (k), Health and Safety Code, as follows:

(i) Requires that a home energy rating system index utilizing Standard 301 of the American National Standard for the Calculation and Labeling of the Energy Performance of Dwelling and Sleeping Units using an Energy Rating Index, commonly cited as ANSI/RESNET/ICC 301, as it existed on January 1, 2021, as described by Subsection (j) be considered in compliance provided that the building meets the mandatory requirements of Section R406.2 of the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code and provided that the building thermal envelope is equal to or greater than the levels of efficiency and solar heat gain coefficient in Table R402.1.2 or Table R402.1.4 of the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code. Deletes existing text requiring that the Energy Rating Index Compliance Alternative or subsequent alternative compliance path as described by Subsection (j) be considered in compliance.

(j) Provides that, for the purposes of Chapter 388 (Texas Building Energy Performance Standards), Standard 301 of the American National Standard for the Calculation and Labeling of the Energy Performance of Dwelling and Sleeping Units using an Energy Rating Index, commonly cited as ANSI/RESNET/ICC 301, as it existed on January 1, 2021, used to measure compliance for single-family residential construction that uses an energy rating index is as follows:

(1) for climate zone 2, an energy rating index of:

(A) 63 or lower from September 1, 2019, to August 31, 2022;

(B) 59 or lower on or after September 1, 2022;

(C) 57 or lower on or after September 1, 2025; and

(D) 55 or lower on or after September 1, 2028;

(2) for climate zone 3, an energy rating index of:

(A) 63 or lower from September 1, 2019, to August 31, 2022;

(B) 59 or lower on or after September 1, 2022;

(C) 57 or lower on or after September 1, 2025; and

(D) 55 or lower on or after September 1, 2028; and

(3) for climate zone 4, an energy rating index of:

(A) 67 or lower from September 1, 2019, to August 31, 2022;

(B) 63 or lower on or after September 1, 2022;

(C) 61 or lower on or after September 1, 2025; and

(D) 59 or lower on or after September 1, 2028.

Deletes existing text providing that, for the purposes of Chapter 388, the Energy Rating Index Compliance Alternative or subsequent alternative compliance path used to measure compliance for single-family residential construction in an optional compliance path of the energy efficiency chapter of the International Residential Code that uses an energy rating index is, for climate zone 2, an energy rating index of 65 or lower from September 1, 2016, to August 31, 2019; for climate zone 3, an energy rating index of 65 or lower from September 1, 2016, to August 31, 2019; and for climate zone 4, an energy rating index of 69 or lower from September 1, 2016, to August 31, 2019. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(k) Provides that this subsection and Subsection (j) expire September 1, 2031, rather than September 1, 2025.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2021.